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## **Testimony in Support of House Bill No.6863, An Act Concerning Enforcement Of Ordinances Related To Public Health And Welfare**

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and distinguished members of Public Health Committee. My name is David McGuire. I am the Staff Attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT) and I'm here to testify in support of House Bill No. 6863, An Act Concerning Enforcement Of Ordinances Related To Public Health and Welfare.

In early 2014, former MLB player Doug Glanville was stopped by a West Hartford Police Officer while shoveling the driveway of his Hartford home. With no introduction, the police officer approached Glanville and asked if he was trying to "make a few extra bucks, shoveling people's driveways."<sup>1</sup> The officer was responding to a complaint from a West Hartford citizen about a municipal ordinance involving an African American man, which led the officer outside of his jurisdiction and in the driveway of Doug Glanville. Later the officer found the man they were looking for, although no charges were filed.

This bill makes absolutely clear that a police officer is prohibited from pursuing an offender outside of the officer's jurisdiction for the purpose of enforcing a municipal ordinance. The current statute on point restricts a police officer's arrest authority outside of their jurisdiction with without a warrant with only two limited exceptions; when the officer is in immediate pursuit of a person the officer has authority to arrest within his jurisdiction or if a felony has been committed.<sup>2</sup> In Mr. Glanville's case, neither of those exceptions applied and the police officer was wrongfully attempting to enforce a municipal ordinance outside his jurisdiction.

The West Hartford Police Department's mission statement states that "[w]e believe in 'community policing', a strategy that calls for high police visibility in the community and open lines of communication between police and the people we serve."<sup>3</sup> The incident that prompted this bill runs against the philosophy of community policing and creates distrust between law enforcement and citizens.

Sadly, Mr. Glanville's experience is not an isolated incident. Wrongful and racially biased stops occur every single day throughout the state of Connecticut. These stops are another circumstance in which police bias drives the law and unfortunately, most of these incidents go unreported.

This bill is a chance for the legislature to reinforce rules on conduct that is illegal and unacceptable.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2014/04/i-was-racially-profiled-in-my-own-driveway/360615/>

<sup>2</sup> CGS § 54-1f

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/gov/departments/police/default.asp>

Police need to follow rules—rules about fairness, equality and even-handedness between communities. A black man stopped and questioned doing absolutely nothing wrong is unfortunately a common occurrence. We believe that if it were a white man shoveling his driveway, the stop would have never occurred. These incidents foster distrust in our police, which compromises everyone's public safety. We urge you to pass this legislation.